

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 INRE-00 ICAE-00
NSCE-00 OC-06 OPR-02 A-01 SY-05 MCE-00 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-02
SP-02 SS-15 SCS-06 CA-01 PER-05 AID-05 PC-05
IO-14 EUR-12 USSS-00 FBOE-00 HA-05 OMB-01 EB-08
FAA-00 DOTE-00 WRDE-00 NEA-10 /136 W
-----072080 101239Z /44

Z 101110Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 0000

UNCLAS NOUAKCHOTT 1869

DEPT PLEASEPASS OFD POSTS AS NECESSARY

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT MR
SUBJ: COUP D'ETAT IN MAURITANIA: SITREP 1. 1000Z JULY 10

REF:NOUAKCHOTT 1859

1. HERE FOLLOWS WHAT EMBASSYHAS BEEN ABLE TO LEARN TO DATE ABOUT
APPARENTLY SUCCESSFUL COUP D'ETAT
WHICH BEGAN IN EARLY MORNING HOURS JULY 10.TA. AS EARLY AS 0500Z JULY
18 AIR MAURITANIE CREW WHICH WAS ABOARD
ITS PLANE READY TO DEPART NOUAKCHOTT FOR SOUTHERN MAURETANIAN TOWN OF

KAEDI WAS APPROACHED BY MILITARY ATEP ANDPLACED UNDER ARREST IN AIR--
PORT. CREW REPORTED THAT MILITARY MEN CUT TELEPHONE LINES FROMAIRPORT.

B. AT 0715Z, EMBOFFS PROCEEDING TO AIRPORT FOR PRIVATE PLANE FLIGHT
TO NORTHERN MAURITANIA OBSERVED THAT ROADS AND KEY POINTS WERE BEING
HEAVILY PATROLLED AND GUARDED BY ARMY. EMBOFFS REACHED AIRPORT TO
LEARN THAT IT WAS CLOSED TO TRAFFIC. IMMEDIATELY THEREAFTER THEY
WERE PLACED UNDER LOOSE ARREST WITH OTHERPASSENGERS AND AIRPORT
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OFFICIALS.
PEOPLE ARRIVING AT AIRPORT SUBSEQUENTLY WERE ALSO ARRESTED.
EMBOFFS REMAINED AT AIRPORT UNTIL 0915A WHEN ARMY OFFICER ARRIVED
TO RELEASE ALL THOSE BEING HELD.
C. AT 0800Z RADIO MAURITANIA, WHICH HAD BEEN OFF AIR, BEGAN BROAD-
CASTING MARTIAL MUSIC AND AT 0820 ISSUED COMMUNIQUE IN FRENCH AND
ARABIC SAYING THAT:J

CORRUPT AND ANTINATIONAL REGIME ENDED AND ARMED FORCES, CHARGED AS
LAST RESORT WITH MAINTAINING NATIONAL LEGITIMACY,
HAVE SEIZED POWER. THIS DONE TO SAVE COUNTRY FROM DISMEMBERMENT.

II. CONSTITUTION, PARLIAMENT, PARTY AND ALL ITS ORGANISMS ARE
DISSOLVED, AND MILITARY COMMITTEE FOR NATIONAL RECTIFICATION
HAS TAKEN ALL POWERS UNTIL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS CAN BE PUT IN
PLACE. NEW GOVT WILL BE FORMED SOON.

III. COMMITTEE DECLARES SOLEMNLY THAT IT WILL RESPECT ALL ENGAGEMENTS
OF MAURITANIAN STATE VIS A VIS OUTSIDE WORLD, INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZAT
IONS,

AS WELL AS RELATIONS WITH BROTHERLY AND FRIENDLY COUNTRIES.

IV. UN, OAU, AND ARAB LEAGUE CHARTERS WILL BE RESPECTED AS WILL LIFE
AND PROPERTY OF FOREIGNERS LIVING IN MAURITANIA.

V. CITIZENS ASKED TO REMAIN CALM AND LISTEN TO INSTRUCTIONS WHICH
WILL BE GIVEN SUBSEQUENTLY.

VI. ADMINISTRATIVE APPARATUS IN INTERIOR OF COUNTRY SHOULD CONTINUE
TO FUNCTION NORMALLY. FOR NOUAKCHOTT, PROGRAM FOR RETURN TO WORK WILL

BE PUBLISHED.

D. EMBOFFS AT AIRPORT HEARD ONE OR TWO SHOTS FIRED, AND SOME SHOOTING
MAY HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN CITY. HOWEVER, CITY IS NOW APPARENTLY CALM.
WE UNDERSTAND FRENCH RADIO HAS ANNOUNCED THAT PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH
IS BEING HELD SOMEWHERE WITHIN COUNTRY. CABINET MINISTERS ARE BELIEVED

UNDER HOUSE ARREST.

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E. APPARENTLY BECAUSE OF ITS CLOSE PROXIMITY TO PRESIDENCY,
EMBASSY IS UNDER ARMY GUARD AND PASSAGE IN AND OUT DENIED. MOVEMENT IN
REST OF CITY, NOTABLE AT AID OFFICES, IS FREER.
FRONTIERS AND AIRPORT REMAIN CLOSED.

2. ALL AMERICANS IN MAURITANIA BELIEVED SAFE AND WELL. KRYZA

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SITREP, GOVERNMENT OVERTHROW
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978NOUAKC01869
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780283-1118
Format: TEL
From: NOUAKCHOTT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780779/aaaacoqu.tel
Line Count: 102
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: d4746078-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 NOUAKCHOTT 1859
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2066225
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: COUP D'ETAT IN MAURITANIA: SITREP 1. 1000Z JULY 10
TAGS: PINT, PINS, MR
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/d4746078-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014